

## ALL OF THE MINERS RESCUED.

Twelve Men Narrowly Escaped Horrible Death in Groves Shaft.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE BATTLE FOR LIFE.

One of the Rescued Miners Tells His Experience—Had Made Their Last Stand—Work of Rescue.

As told in The Times of yesterday one of the most destructive and perilous fires that has occurred in this State for some time was the burning yesterday morning at 1:30 o'clock, near Middlethorpe, of the surface structures of the Groves shaft, and the partial destruction of the upper wood casings in the head of the shaft.

Just at present it is impossible to estimate the loss, but Mr. A. Reese, the general superintendent of the Virginia Coal and Coke Company, who are the lessees of the Middlethorpe Coal Company, roughly places his company's loss at from \$25,000 to \$30,000, and, perhaps, more.

The scene around the shaft yesterday

pany and some of the residents of the neighborhood had arrived upon the scene and were busy making their aid. Superintendent Jones, when he was first alarmed, tried to use the pumps, to which these were attached, but these refused to work, and his only supply of water to be had was secured from a small pond near by, and had to be brought in buckets. Had the pumps responded properly when the fire was first discovered it might have been extinguished.

Superintendent Jones next turned his attention to the mouth of the shaft, with a view of saving the miners. His object was to prevent burning timbers from falling into the pit, and, if possible, to pull away the structure from over the mouth of the shaft so as to keep out the smoke, which was being carried down by the natural currents of air that always descend from the top shaft.

WHAT SAVED THE MEN.

By a chance of fate or providence he was strangely aided in his rescue of the men. Near the top of the head gear over the pit a small trestle known as the dump runs in a southerly direction for about one hundred yards. As luck would have it this trestle, and in its fall dragged over with it the heavy gear and machinery used for raising and lowering the cages. This was all that saved from death the twelve men who were below. It did not take long after the head gear had fallen to remove the burning timbers and put out the flames in the mouth of the shaft. As soon as the natural currents had cleared the mine of smoke those at the mouth of the shaft were made

known between Chapins and Little Mountain, as a mistake of the train dispatcher at Newberry.

CONDITION OF THE JAIL.

Dr. Wm. S. Gordon Urges the Construction of a New City Prison.

The Council Committee on Grounds and Buildings held its regular semi-monthly meeting in room No. 2 of the City Hall last evening, with the following members present: Messrs. Mountcastle (chairman), Briggs, King, Lawder, and Speed.

A communication was received from Mr. Fred H. Garber, who offered a piece of property, containing three or four acres, in Marshall ward, for a public park. On motion of Mr. Briggs, the matter was laid before the committee.

The contract for the furnishing of fifty lockers to the new cavalry armory was awarded to Mr. J. M. Garber, the lowest bidder, at his bid of \$100.

The pay-roll of the department was approved.

## STUBBORN MIDNIGHT FIRE.

A Cooper Shop and a Pickle Establishment Destroyed.

ADJACENT BUILDINGS THREATENED.

Only Saved by Most Heroic Work on the Part of the Firemen—Narrow Escapes From Death—The Damage and Insurance.

Fire last night destroyed the cooper shop of H. Metzger Sons and the establishment of the Richmond Pickle Company, in Eighteenth street, between Main and Cary.

The flames made a furious and stubborn effort to sweep away the entire block, and there was a time when it looked as if the long red tongue of fire would get beyond the control of the firemen.

The Richmond Fire Department, in combating the flames to the two buildings destroyed, made one of the most brilliant and successful fights that has ever been recorded in its history, and great honor is theirs.

THE ORIGIN OF THE FIRE IS UNKNOWN, BUT FROM INTERVIEWS WITH SEVERAL PROMINENT OFFICIALS OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, IT IS BELIEVED IT WAS THE WORK OF AN INDEPENDENT.

STILL ALARM AT 9:15.

A still alarm was turned in at 9:10 o'clock, to which Engine Companies Nos. 1 and 2 and Truck Company No. 2 responded. Chief Puller, Assistant Chief Shaw, and President Frischkorn, of the Board of Fire Commissioners, also responded to the alarm. They found a small blaze in Metzger's factory in a box of trash under some steps on the first floor. This they quickly extinguished, and after making a thorough investigation of the building left the scene.

At 11 o'clock, as Officer C. H. Hughes left the first station to go upon his beat, he was alarmed by the cry of fire. He returned to the station he turned in the alarm from Box 25 at 11:00 o'clock.

To this call Engine Companies Nos. 2 and 3 and Truck Company No. 2 responded. Chief Puller, President Frischkorn, and Superintendent Thompson were soon on the scene.

They realized at a glance the dangerous locality of the fire, and the flames having already reached the roof of the building, they sent in a second alarm calling out engine companies No. 2 and 1 and Truck Company No. 1. Soon the block upon which the threatened buildings stood was surrounded by fire engines, truck companies, firemen, and a mass of spectators. A dozen streams were turned upon the flames, and the gallant fight commenced. At this juncture a gust of wind sprang up from the south, and fanned the tongues of fire to even greater fury. The firemen worked like demons, but despite their efforts it was plainly evident that the flames were too much for them.

REINFORCEMENTS ARRIVE.

It was then that Secretary Paynter, of the Fire Board, sent in to the general office private calls for engine companies Nos. 4, 5, and 6. With the arrival of these much-needed reinforcements the firemen took new heart, and under the able direction of Chief Puller and Assistant Chief Shaw, they again attacked upon the desperate bravery the almost triumphant flames.

The men from engine companies Nos. 2 and 3 mounted to the top of the threatened building, and from there they commenced a flank attack upon the flames. Harshwick's factory is separated from that of Metzger Sons by a narrow alley, which runs through the entire length of the block. Next to the main building, the flames had spread to the Tobacco Company. It was with a view of saving these two structures that the firemen made the flank attack. Hardly had they gotten upon the roof and turned the hose upon the burning building than the flames broke out in a new and most irresistible force. Fanned by the gale, the flames flared fifty feet into the air, and then nesting a counter current of wind, they sprang back and almost enveloped the leave firemen.

THE BRAVE FIREMEN.

Again and again they were driven from their stand by the intense heat, which scorched and blistered their faces and hands, but at times they had to retreat, just so often they returned with doubled perseverance to the attack. At length the flames broke into their very faces, and a building stood of smoke would cover them, but still they stood at their post and kept the streams of water playing upon the building. It was a fight between human bravery and endurance, and it was a heroic element, and the former was victorious.

A change in the wind for a few moments gave the almost exhausted men the advantage, and they seized it to re-attack the flames. In about twenty minutes they had the flames in this quarter under control.

INFLAMMABLE MATERIAL.

The fire along the Eighteenth street front was equally as stubborn as elsewhere. As soon as the firemen got steadily to work they realized that there was a lot of inflammable material in the building. In half an hour after the department got to work it was clearly seen that the building occupied by H. Metzger Sons, where the fire originated, would be gutted. This building was filled with inflammable material, such as flour barrels and staves, and the fire, and the seething mass of flames grew hotter by degrees until it was a matter of much difficulty for the firemen to enter.

The fire broke out in the rear of the building, and it was noticed that the top of the front wall was leaning towards Eighteenth street, and would likely fall soon.

TO SAVE THE RASH FACTORY.

Facing Cary street and extending back to the rear of the block, the factory of Charles W. Harshwick. This contained a large quantity of lumber and combustible material. Fortunately for the firemen, the wind was blowing in the opposite direction, else this would almost certainly have caught, and the large amount of inflammable material would have made the work of controlling the flames exceedingly difficult. As it was, the building escaped, and the firemen kept the flames from spreading to that building.

The fire fought up the streets in the neighborhood for squares around, and a large crowd of people from various parts of the city were attracted to the scene. The work of the engine, the horses and trucks moving from one place to another, the flames shooting high into the air from time to time, the firemen hurrying to and fro in their brave battle with the destructive flames, all combined to make an animated scene full of excitement and danger.

TWO NARROW ESCAPES.

While the flames were raging in the cooper shop several firemen were seen at work discharging the water from the second story windows from a ladder. One of the firemen, who was standing some fifteen feet from the ground, lost his footing, and

in the endeavor to recover his balance dropped the hose for a moment, and was in the act of falling when several other firemen who were standing by rushed to his assistance and prevented his falling. The stream was in a moment directed upon the flames, and the battle continued.

Another fireman, whose name could not be learned, had his hand badly cut while at work handling one of the hose and had to leave the scene. He was not seriously hurt.

The narrow escape of the night was when the top of the front wall of the cooper-shop collapsed. A few minutes here that a number of men had entered the lower floor of the burning building in an effort to get the papers and books of the establishment.

Only flames raged above them, and the heat grew so intense that they soon had to leave. Only one minute after they left the building the top of the front wall was seen to totter and fall with a tremendous crash, that startled everybody in the neighborhood. At that time there were half a dozen firemen directing two streams into the cooper-shop, and they were standing very nearly under the falling wall. Some one yelled, "Look out!" when the wall began to totter, and the firemen moved backward in time to avoid the danger.

By this time the wind from the South had grown much stronger, and there was no longer any doubt that the building on the north occupied by Johnson Bros. & Co., proprietors of the Richmond Pickle Company, was on fire. This is a large three-story brick building, owned by H. Metzger Sons, and extends back towards Nineteenth street for something more than one-fourth of a block. In the building was carried on a pickle manufactory, and there was a great deal of stock, such as pickles, preserves, and saucers inside.

The quantity was to keep the flames from spreading to J. L. Ebenack's place on the north, as it looked very much as if the flames would spread to that place. By faithful and persistent fighting under the efficient direction of Chief Puller the building, as well as the others in the neighborhood, were saved.

It was about 12:30 o'clock this morning before the fire was gotten under control, and it was not extinguished entirely until two hours after that time.

DAMAGE AND INSURANCE.

The building occupied as a cooper shop was owned by H. Metzger Sons, which firm is composed of Charles A. Metzger, Jr. and Edward H. Metzger, and was thought to be worth about \$10,000. This was completely gutted, and part of the walls demolished. The stock was thought to be worth about \$3,000 in the building, and about \$1,000 on the street. The adjoining building was also owned by H. Metzger Sons, and was worth about \$10,000. This was also gutted, and the loss was very small. The stock, which was made up largely of pickles, saucers, bottles, etc., was owned by the Richmond Pickle Co., of which Arthur G. and L. D. Johnson and William L. Young are the proprietors, and was worth about \$5,000. Mr. Johnson thinks his insurance was about \$5,000. The total loss to buildings and stocks was about \$25,000, with about \$10,000 more in the stock of the two buildings which were temporarily thrown out of employment quite a number of employees.

A GARDEN OF SINGING FLOWERS.

An Excellent Cantata Handsomely Rendered by Sixty Richmond Ladies.

Whose soul is so dead that it is barren of love of nature's sweet flowers? Their beauty and fragrance make us rich in melody and sweetest poetry, stirring the noblest emotions of our being. We emulate the best loved, the tenderest and sweetest things in life with flowers. "Full many a flower is born to blush unseen."

And waste its sweetness on the desert air."

but the beautiful collection of flowers that adorned the stage in Belvidere Hall last evening were not destined to such a fate. A large and appreciative audience who will not soon forget the evening of exquisite pleasure these flowers afforded them. It was a garden of flowers, and of living, vocal flowers, in the excellent cantata, entitled "The Garden of Singing Flowers," which was presented under the excellent direction of Mrs. W. J. Hooper, by about sixty of Richmond's fair ladies and a trio of her gallant men. About two-thirds of the females were young ladies, and the other third of the number little misses, and all were bedecked in costumes appropriate to the respective flowers they represented, each costume being adorned with like appropriate real flowers. The Queen of Flowers, (Miss Shell) sat on her throne, and her head was adorned with a rich crown. She was dressed in a suit of rich red, and her four attendants wore costumes of the same rich hue, all representing the "red rose." The stage presented a lovely picture, with these sixty young and fair ladies in their varied-colored handsome garments and floral adornments. The music of the cantata is pretty and catchy, and is well rendered. The voices are very good indeed, and they sing in perfect time. There were solos, trios, quartets, and choruses in profusion. Among the specially attractive features of the cantata were the following: "The Marriage of the Lily and the Rose," and "The

Base of Sharon," solos, and quartettes—the solos by Miss Ella Haurand, and the quartettes by Miss Haurand, Miss Charles, and Messrs. Foster and Robertson; "I Choose to be a Daisy," by Miss Martin; "The Flowers that Bloom in the Spring," by Mr. Freeman. These several pieces were encored heartily. Mr. Freeman, as "The Man in the Moon," Mr. Foster, as "The Gardener," and Mr. Robertson, as assistant, rendered their parts admirably, and the little misses charmed the audience with their superb singing and acting. The choruses were magnificent, and, indeed, the entire rendition of the programme, including the grand closing drill, reflected the highest credit on the management of Mrs. Hooper, on each individual in the lovely cantata, and on our fair city for possessing such rich and rare talent. The entertainment is well worthy of reproduction before a magnificent audience at the Academy.

The cantata was presented last evening for the benefit of Richmond Lodge of Good Templars, and quite a neat sum was realized despite the inclement weather.

This cantata will be reproduced in full at Corcoran Hall on next Friday evening for the benefit of the parsonage fund of Trinity Methodist church, and if the church folk want to see and hear a good thing they will turn out en masse.

More Cyclone Victims.

DEMON, TEX., May 19.—A courier arrived from Joel Chickasaw Nation, reports the death of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond, who were injured in the cyclone.

General Lee returned to Washington from Baltimore this morning, and this afternoon had another conference with the President regarding his mission to Cuba. To-morrow he will visit the District of Columbia at the Washington Light Infantry Armory. He was the lion of the occasion, and was compelled to make a brief address. His speech was one of his characteristically happy efforts. General Lee will probably start for Cuba on Friday. He will go by rail to Tampa and take a steamer there.

A POLITICAL SENSATION.

The political sensation here to-day is the statement made on excellent authority

## GEN. FITZHUGH LEE A LION.

He Held Another Conference With the President Concerning Cuba.

HE WILL START FOR HIS POST FRIDAY.

Quay Has Desisted the Anti-McKinley Combination—Bets Against the Ohio

Main—Eight to Ten With Few Takers.

Colonial Dames to be Incorporated.

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 19.—General Fitzhugh Lee returned to Washington from Baltimore this morning, and this afternoon had another conference with the President regarding his mission to Cuba. To-morrow he will visit the District of Columbia at the Washington Light Infantry Armory. He was the lion of the occasion, and was compelled to make a brief address. His speech was one of his characteristically happy efforts. General Lee will probably start for Cuba on Friday. He will go by rail to Tampa and take a steamer there.

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that Senator Quay has deserted the combination of Republicans leaders who are opposed to McKinley's nomination, and will vote McKinley at Canton, with a view to making a combination with the Ohio statesman.

Quay, it is understood, wishes to be Vice-President. He never had the slightest chance of securing the first place on the ticket, and though he succeeded in convincing both his friends and enemies that he was sincere in his fight for the nomination, recent developments seem to show that original surmise was correct, and that Mr. Quay from the first has been playing merely to secure terms from the candidate whose chances of success seemed greatest.

WATCHING THE CAT HOP.

One thing is certain, however, the wily Pennsylvania believed sincerely that McKinley would be beaten. He probably thought Reed would be the nominee, and he made haste to ally himself with the man from Maine, whose wife he did this at the very outset of the preliminary campaign, it has been noticeable that he has had nothing to say in opposition to McKinley.

At the same time, by maintaining a pretence that he was endeavoring to secure the nomination for himself, he avoided the necessity for declaring positively for any other candidate.

Notwithstanding Mr. Quay's alleged determination to support McKinley, the cause, there is still a feeling here that the representative of the high protection idea may be beaten.

A SIGNIFICANT ACTION.

One of the officials of the Senate has had placed in his hands \$10,000, which he was asked to bet at the rate of \$100 to \$1 that McKinley will not be the nominee. Strange as it may seem, which many of the Republican senators are betting men, they do not rush at the bet with the eagerness of men satisfied they have a good thing. They have taken about \$2,000 of the money, but the rest is still waiting investment. This is but a slight and trivial circumstance, but it tends to show the doubt that still exists among Republican leaders concerning the prospects of McKinley.

McKINLEY AND THE A. P. A.

This doubt is due to two causes. One, McKinley's doubtful position, on the money question; the other, his recent endorsement by the A. P. A. organization. The latter, it is felt, will not aid the cause, while the former, eastern men assert, should ensure his defeat. If McKinley is not a silver man, they charge, then he is endeavoring to deceive the silver men of the West. If, on the other hand, he is a silver man, he is endeavoring to protect a monopoly from upon the East. This is a cogent argument, and may yet affect the convention.

Notwithstanding all this, however, McKinley's position seems to favor McKinley. He is, however, showing no confidence in himself, and while seemingly afraid to announce his position, his friends are doing everything possible to remove the suspicion that attaches to his silence.

THE COLONIAL DAMES.

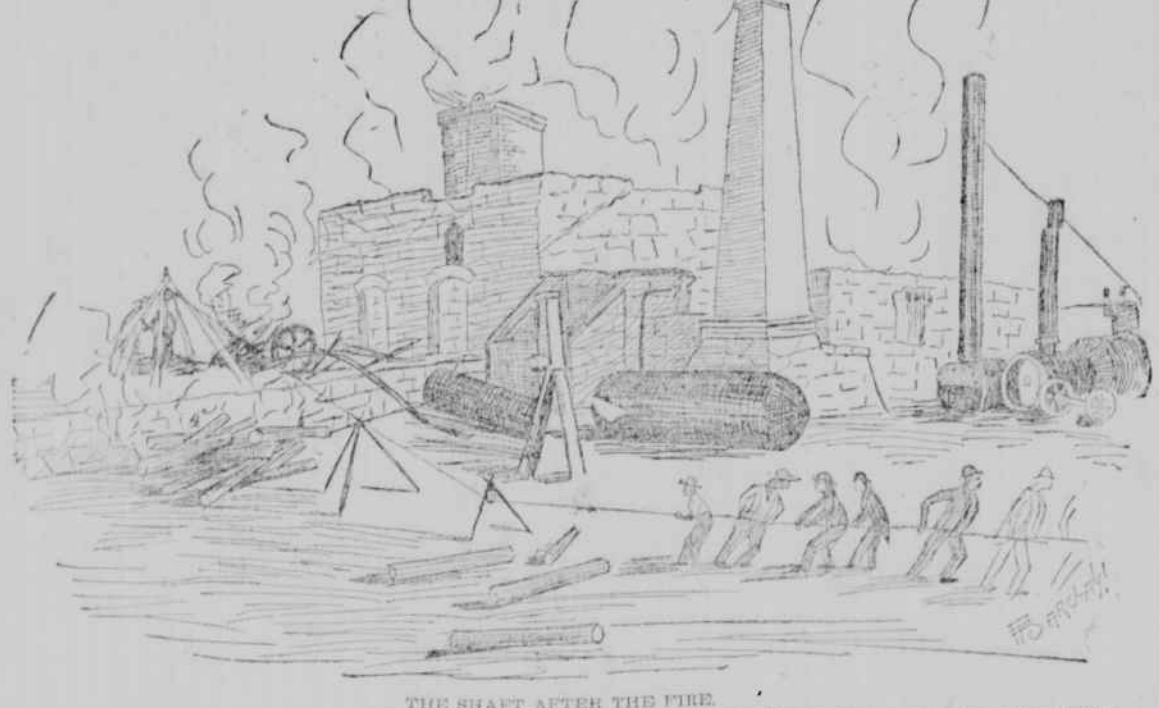
The following bill, introduced by Representative Quigg, of New York, passed the House on yesterday:

"To incorporate the National Society of Colonial Dames of America."

The following prominent Virginia ladies are among the incorporators: Evelyn Byron Caldwell Robinson (Mrs. William Russell Robinson), of Virginia; Elizabeth Henry Lyons (Mrs. James Lyons), of Virginia; Lucy Carter Trent (Mrs. Peterfield Trent), of Virginia; Isabelle Dixon Mays (Mrs. Peter H. Mays), of Virginia.

North Carolina is also well represented by the following well-known ladies: Betsey Andrews Atkinson Gibson, John W. Atkinson, of North Carolina; Lucy Wright Giles (Mrs. Clayton Giles), of North Carolina; Florence Hill Kibler (Mrs. George Wilson Kibler), of North Carolina.

The President has granted executive clemency to Mr. F. G. Jamison, of Roanoke, found guilty of violating the revenue laws and sentenced to pay a fine of \$50 and imprisonment for six months.



THE SHAFT AFTER THE FIRE. The machinery and boiler rooms appear to the right.

was one of utter desolation and destruction. All that remained of this excellently-equipped mine were the blackened walls of the compressing, boiler, and engine-rooms, and the charred and smoking timbers of the wooden structure over the mouth of the pit. While at present the flames are under control, still they have by no means been extinguished, and a few feet from the mouth of the pit a pile of coal, containing about seventy tons, is burning with a stubborn defiance. The extreme heat from this great pile of fire seriously interferes with the work of extinguishing the flames.

THE WORK OF RESCUE.

It was only by the most heroic efforts and vain bravery in the face of impending death, cool-headed thought and concentrated action, that the twelve miners, comprising the night shift, were rescued from a horrible death.

At 11 o'clock the night shift went on duty to work until 1 o'clock in the morning. The men who descended into the mine were John Harshwick (colored), fireman; Robert Stratton, engineer; George Tucker, assistant fireman; Philip Chatham, assistant engineer; Cornelius Carter (colored), John Woodbridge (colored), Oliver Nichol, Wadsworth Zimacki (colored), John Lind (colored), Thomas Anderson (colored), and David Johnson (colored). It was about ten o'clock when Walter Warhouse, the engineer of the shift for this week, discovered that at the roof of the compressing-room was on fire. He rushed in a moment the great danger that threatened the lives of the miners who were in the pit, and instantly gave the alarm, and at the same time ran and awoke Mr. Thomas H. Jones, the superintendent of the Middlethorpe mines. While Warhouse was doing this the flames had made great headway, and when Mr. Jones arrived upon the scene, the boiler-house, engine-house, and the head gear over the pit were a mass of flames.

A HEROIC ACT.

His first thought for the entrapped men, when he knew would soon be suffocated if he could not get to the bottom of the shaft. With another brave man had also realized the danger that threatened the miners, and to his bravery and prompt action the men undoubtedly owe their lives.

Walter Lockard, who was employed at the head of the shaft, as soon as he saw the fire, gave the alarm to the engineer, and jumping into one of the cages was rushed through six hundred feet of fire darkness to the bottom of the pit. This was a dangerous mission, but he went, at the risk of his own life, to warn his fellow-workmen of their impending fate, and it possible to give them an opportunity to escape. On reaching the bottom of the shaft, he ran along the level for about six hundred feet, to the incline where the men were working, and gave the alarm. The startled miners made a rush for the cage, and on reaching it they saw the signal to hold, which was heard by those above, who were powerless to render any aid to them, the flames having by this time enveloped the hoisting engine. Then came the light for life.

THE FIGHT FOR LIFE.

The men were in darkness, with the exception of the faint light from their lamps. They were six hundred feet under ground, their avenue of escape was cut off by a mass of flames, while the small current of air with which they had to sustain life was rapidly becoming charged with smoke. As they stood at the bottom of the pit and realized that death stared them in the face, the second cage, which was stationed at the mouth of the shaft, suddenly fell with a noise like thunder, the supporting ropes having been cut by those above, who were powerless to render any aid to them, the flames having by this time enveloped the hoisting engine. Then came the light for life.

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THE FIGHT FOR LIFE.

proved, and a number of bills entered to be paid.

The City Engineer was instructed to have an iron water-tight lid in Jefferson Park, at a cost of \$100, which amount is to be taken out of the contingent fund. The appointment of the money to be paid to the City Engineer was laid over until the next meeting.

Colonel Cutshaw stated that in accordance with the instructions received from the committee, he had written to Mr. Gordon, the physician to the jail, asking him for a report in regard to the sanitary condition of the jail. He then submitted the following letter, which he had received in reply:

Richmond, Va., May 19, 1896.

To the Committee on Grounds and Buildings, City Council of Richmond:

Gentlemen—I received on yesterday a communication from Colonel W. E. Cutshaw, City Engineer, embodying a request on your part for my report as to the sanitary condition of the jail. In reply to the following statement, to be filed with Colonel Cutshaw's report:

First. The location of the building of the jail is unhealthy, promiscuous, and, for many other reasons, undesirable.

Second. The necessary crowding of the prisoners in the cells has the cause of serious, and in several cases of fatal disease, by actual measurement, I have ascertained that in some instances prisoners have been breathing in a space which covers less than one hundred cubic feet of air to each inmate.

Third. The lack of facilities for personal cleanliness and decency has caused sickness, and will become a still more serious and dangerous element in the number of inmates and the advent of warm weather.

Fourth. The lack of proper hospital arrangements, and especially of wards for the isolation of contagious and infectious diseases, may at any time prove disastrous, and is an element of danger to the prisoners and to the officers and employees of the jail. In this connection I beg to state a recent case of cholera in a lying-in woman, who survived, and is now in the hospital.

Fifth. The jail in its present unsanitary condition is a focus of disease, and adds more to the general amount of sickness in the community.

Sixth. There have been several epidemics, limited in number, of typhoid fever, which have been caused, as much as by the prompt removal of patients as by any other measures adopted. In this connection it is well to state that the removal of infectious cases cannot always be effected, especially in the summer months, and in the absence of any sanitary law on this subject by which the proper authorities can act.

In view, therefore, of the foregoing facts, of the increase, year by year, in the number of inmates, and the steadily increasing menace to the health and to the lives of all concerned, I would respectfully suggest that you consider the urgent need for a jail which will fulfill and meet the indications enumerated. I am, respectfully,

W. M. GORDON, M. D., Physician to City Jail.

In connection with this letter Colonel Cutshaw suggested that the Committee ask the City Sergeant for a written report as to the number of prisoners, how they are provided for, and in regard to the sanitary condition of the jail. He also referred to the probable increase of the number of prisoners that will have to be accommodated in this building. The City Sergeant should also be asked to make any suggestion that may recommend themselves to him. If such a report was submitted, then it would be possible, with the aid of Dr. Gordon's report, to make up a skeleton outline for a new jail, which would include all requirements, and upon this outline an appropriate estimate of the cost of construction could then be prepared.

Mr. King moved that Dr. Gordon's report be laid on the table until such a report could be obtained from the City Sergeant. His motion was agreed to.

Mr. King moved that the City Sergeant be authorized to transact such routine business of minor importance the committee adjourned.